

The Gramophone Shop, Inc.

Record Supplement

for

April, 1939

EIGHTEEN EAST FORTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEW YORK CITY

CODE SYMBOLS

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Shop Record Supplement

AS	L'Anthologie Sonore	HPS	Historical Poets Series
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BP	Brunswick-Polydor	MC	Musicraft
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CdM	Le Chant du Monde	PAT	Pathé
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FL	Florilège	TAC	Theatre Arts Committee Re- cordings
FRM	Friends of Recorded Music	TI	Timely
G	Gramophone (H. M. V.)	TC	Technichord
GSV	Gramophone Shop "Varieties"	V	Victor (VM, Masterpiece Set)
GT	Gamut		

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Vol. II

Record Reviews for April, 1939

No. 4

BY R. D. DARRELL

Arditti: Il Bacio & Parla! Miliza Korjus (soprano, in Italian) with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Schonbaumfeld. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-12588, price \$1.50.

The coloratura star of *The Great Waltz* did these virtuoso gymnastics on the well worn flying rings of Arditti's vocal waltzes some years ago and this disc has been popular among collectors in the imported pressings (G-C2789 or G-EH908). Mme. Korjus sings brilliantly, but the musical interest of her vehicles is very slight and the quality of her voice is not revealed as attractively here as in some of her other early recordings.

BACH

Bach: Overture à la manière française (Partita No. 7 in B minor) (7 sides) & **Fugue in A minor.** Ernst Victor Wolff (harpsichord). 4-12" discs, Nos. C-69462-75D, in Set CM-357, price complete with album \$6.00 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

The hitherto unrecorded *Overture in French Style* or *Seventh Partita* (Peters Edition Vol. 6, No. 2) was published in 1735 in Part 2 of the *Clavierübungen*; it was one of the three keyboard works which Bach specifically designated as having been written for the double-manual *clavicembalo* (the other two were the Italian Concerto and Goldberg Variations). It is more elaborately and freely constructed than any of the first six Partitas which were published as a set unit in Part 1 of the *Clavierübungen*. Its makeup obviously indicates that Bach was attempting to adapt the form and spirit of the orchestral suite to the keyboard medium: *Overture* (Sides 1/2); *Courante*, *Gavotte I*, *Gavotte II*, *Gavotte I* (Side 3); *Passepied I*, *Passepied II*, *Passepied I* (Side 4); *Sarabande* (Side 5); *Bourrée I*, *Bourrée II*, *Bourrée I*, *Gigue* (Side 6); *Echo* (Side 7). A fine work, particularly notable for the broad

opening *Overture* and the brilliance and originality of the closing *Echo*, it is welcome indeed to the recorded repertory even in this somewhat stolid performance by Dr. Wolff, a straightforward enough reading, but one lacking in imagination and buoyancy.

The odd-side is devoted to another first recording: the isolated A minor Fugue (Peters Edition Vol. 9, No. 15), a magnificent and curiously neglected work, and one that shows Dr. Wolff's talents to considerably better advantage than the Partita. The recording is fair, but not unusual.

Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D minor. Edouard Commette (St. Jean Cathedral, Lyons, Organ). 2 sides, 12" disc, No. C-69490D, price \$1.50.

Commette's older version of the great D minor Toccata and Fugue (C-7265M) was long ranked as the best of some eleven recorded organ performances. His dramatic but unsensational reading is now given new and considerably more effective recording, as good as if not superior to that of Dr. Schweitzer's somewhat sluggish performance in Vol. I of the Bach Organ Society (CM-270). To my mind the recording falls short of the highest modern standards (exemplified by the best organ discs from Pathé, Musicraft, and Technichord), but even so there can be little question of the superiority of this over the other existing versions of the work in its original form.

Bazin: Maître Pathelin—Je pense à vous quand je m'éveille (Romance) & Gounod: Ou voulez-vous aller? (Barcarolle). Tino Rossi (tenor, in French) with Marcel Cariven's Orchestra. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. C-4225M, price \$1.00.

The silken voiced M. Rossi abandons his music hall tango repertory again to demonstrate his suave talents in a plaintive air from the best-known work of a minor French opera

composer, Emmanuel Joseph Francois Bazin (1816-1878), coupled with a familiar coy ditty by Gounod. Both tunes are distinctly "pretty pretty" creations, but Rossi makes the most of their graceful sentimentality. As always, he records perfectly.

BEETHOVEN

Beethoven: Fantasia in G minor, Op. 77. See under Collections (Album of Fantasias).

Beethoven: Piano Sonata Society, Vol. XIV. Artur Schnabel (piano). 14 sides, 7-12" imported discs in a Society Album, subscription price \$17.50 complete.

Six Bagatelles, Op. 126

Fantasia in G minor, Op. 77

Rondo a Capriccio in G major, Op. 129 ("Fury over a lost groschen")

Rondo in A major, Grove's No. 164

Variations in F minor, Op. 34

Volume 14 of the Beethoven Sonata Society, devoted to smaller piano works since all the sonatas have now been recorded by Schnabel, is announced to be available around April 25, and will be reviewed in the May *Record Supplement*.

Beethoven: Sonata (Piano) No. 21 in C major ("Waldstein"), Op. 53 (5 sides) & Bagatelle in E flat major, Op. 33, No. 1. Walter Gieseeking (piano). 3-12" discs, Nos. C-69476/8D, in Set CM-358, price complete with album \$5.00 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Considering the popularity of the "Waldstein" Sonata and its importance among Beethoven's works and in music history, it is odd indeed that the gramophone has paid it such scant attention. Three versions are listed in *The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music*: Schnabel's (in Vol. IX of the Beethoven Sonata Society, released in 1936), Wilhelm Kempff's (PD-95474/6 of 1932 — the Brunswick pressings have been cut-out), and Frederick Lamond's (G-D1278/9 of 1931 — cut-out in the current H.M.V. catalogue). In addition to the new Gieseeking set I believe there is a recorded performance by Leonid Kreutzer (Japanese Columbia, never available here so far as I know).

Neither Schnabel nor Kempff gives Gieseeking serious competition: the recorded tone of the former is unusually harsh and unpleasant; Kempff displays a fine grasp of the music, but his performance is quite inadequately recorded. It is a pity that the new set does not have more able rivals, for without somewhat comparable performances it is difficult to realize the superb excellence of the Gieseeking version. There may be some to say that he does not have the full interpretative breadth the music demands, but I can't follow them. The universal appreciation of Gieseeking's remarkable delicacy and sensitivity has blinded many

listeners to the fact that he is never lacking in vigor, drama, and force when such qualities are called for. Only, he always employs them as a true musician, not as a demagogic tonal spellbinder. For sheer pianism of the highest order and richest variety, this set is notably outstanding; add Gieseeking's most subtle and eloquent musicianship and bold clear recording of the highest modern standard, and we have — as in truth we do have here — one of the great works of the whole recorded piano repertory.

The hitherto unrecorded Bagatelle on the odd-side is a pleasant inconsequential tid-bit, but the Sonata is a starred item that by all means should be made a companion set to the older Gieseeking version of the Sonata in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2 (CM-X39) in every disc library of any consequence.

Bloch: Baal Shem No. 2, Nigun (Improvisation). Nathan Milstein (violin) & Leopold Mittmann (piano). 2 sides, 10" disc, No. C-17134D, price \$1.00.

The Szigeti version (C-2047M) of this popular "Picture of Chassidic Life" is quite old and Menuhin's (V-7108) has been withdrawn both here and in England, leaving an apt spot for a new release. Milstein plays it simply and with assured skill, and he is ably accompanied and recorded. In short, the best available gramophonic edition of *Nigun* and one of the best of Milstein's discs to date.

Brahms: Intermezzo in E major, Op. 116, No. 4. See under Collections (Album of Fantasias).

Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a ("St. Antoni Choral"). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. C-69484/5D, in Set CM-X125, price complete with album \$3.25.

This is the fourth electrically recorded version of the Brahms Haydn Variations, preceded by Toscanini's (VM-355 of 1937), Henry Wood's (D-25595/6 of 1935), and Casals' (V-9287/9 of 1928). Of these Toscanini's has of course been the prime favorite, but once again I suspect that many Americans will follow Weingartner here as they have so often in the past with Brahms as well as Beethoven. They may not think so when they begin this performance, for it starts off almost too depreciatingly and promises to be a very polite and restrained reading. But, as in so many other Weingartner works, one quickly adjusts oneself to the conductor's carefully considered scheme of values, and before long is — if not exactly carried away, for Weingartner never attempts to sweep his audience off its feet — at least willingly and delightfully carried along. No one has captured Brahms' geniality and warm sentiment as completely as Weingartner. And in his hands sentiment never becomes sentimentality. We get Brahms' richness with no loss of his vigor; the only loss is of that often uncomfortable sense of athleticism many conductors give us in place of

true strength and power. Once again I have to sound the familiar warning that Weingartner's reading is not as dramatic and exciting as some others (in this case, of course, Toscanini's), with the immediate qualification that this is small price to pay for the glorious breadth and sunniness and ripe satisfaction he gives us in the place of electrifying drama.

Chopin: Sonata (Piano) No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. V-15370/2, in Set VM-548, price complete with album \$6.50 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Few current gramophonic "duplications" have as much justification as this: of the two previous versions the early electrical set by Grainger (CM-32) has been withdrawn, leaving only Cortot's H.M.V. album (GM-142) dating from 1933. Neither of these was exactly a master performance and the field has long been wide open for a reading as poetic and fluent as Brailowsky's, and such admirably solid and clean recording as he is given here. This is Brailowsky's debut under the Victor label (previously he has appeared only for Polydor—and American Brunswick and English Decca Polydor repressings), and it is one of the most effective of his many gramophonic appearances.

Incidentally, the work itself, while not a great sonata in the orthodox sense, is a fine piece of music, one of Chopin's ablest and most persuasive essays in the larger forms.

Copland: El Salón México (3 sides) & Russian Folk Song: Song of the Volga Boatmen (Arr. Stravinsky). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs, Nos. V-15363/4, in Set VM-546, price complete with album \$4.50.

Aaron Copland's celebrated *Music for the Theatre* and high school opera *The Second Hurricane* still remain unrecorded, but at last we get a major orchestral work from his pen on discs, the nervously and incisively rhythmized *El Salón México*, composed in 1936, and already a successful item on many symphonic programs and over the air. It is by far the most interesting and effective example of his work to be recorded and while hardly characteristic of his style, it is notably representative of his keen skill. The piece takes its name from a popular ballroom in Mexico City, one of the tourist "hot spots" best characterized perhaps by a sign on one of its walls that reads "Please don't throw lighted butts on the floors so the ladies don't burn their feet!" Several native themes are introduced, most of them taken—according to Mr. Copland—from the *Canciónera Mexicana* by Frances Toor or *El Folk-lore y la Musica Mexicana* by Ruben M. Campos.

These themes form the brightly colored if somewhat glassy stones out of which Copland has constructed his flashily picturesque tonal mosaic. A remarkably brilliant concert piece, particularly as played and recorded here in the best tradition of the Boston Symphony's series, it suffers

a bit from a lack of variety in tonality, and some may find its rhythmic intensity rather too inflexible and strenuous. Nevertheless, it is a notable addition to the scant disc repertory of contemporary native orchestral works, and it stands a far better chance than most to achieve considerable popularity.

On the odd-side is an incongruous bit of Stravinsky *curiosa*, an acrid setting of *The Volga Boatmen's Song* for wind and brass orchestra.

Debussy: Twelve Etudes (Dedicated to the Memory of Chopin). Adolph Hallis (piano). 12 sides, 6-12" imported discs, Nos. D-K891/6, price \$9.00 the set (plain album 50c additional).

No. 1 (Five Fingers, after Czerny) & No. 2 (Thirds)

No. 3 (Fourth) & No. 4 (Sixths)

No. 5 (Octaves) & No. 6 (Eight Fingers)

No. 7 (Chromatic Intervals) & No. 8 (Grace Notes)

No. 9 (Reiterated Notes) & No. 10 (Contrasted Tone)

No. 11 (Extended Arpeggios) & No. 12 (Chords)

This is the first complete recording of the set of twelve studies Debussy wrote in 1915, one of his last works, followed only by the three sonatas ('cello and piano; flute, harp, and viola; violin and piano). Some years ago, however, Jacqueline Blancard recorded six of these études (Nos. 1, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11 on PD-27297/9, B-90274/6 withdrawn), and there are also isolated versions of No. 1 (Janine Weill, U-AP1528) and No. 11 (Horowitz, V-8996).

Like Chopin's Studies these are far more than technical exercises, true atmospheric pieces despite their lack of descriptive titles or programs. But for the most part they are not as immediately approachable nor as attractive as the *Préludes* or *Images* for piano. Perhaps Debussy was written out; perhaps he wrote more enigmatically and remotely. There are many beautiful passages here, many more that are curiously fascinating. I should like to hear what a Gieseking could do with them before coming to any final conclusion regarding their significance. Mr. Hallis—a newcomer to records, I think—is no Gieseking. He is a deft and musicianly pianist, and gives us a skillful, well-recorded reading, but one that is somewhat lacking in warmth and sensuousness.

Dinicu: Hora Staccato (Arr. Heifetz, Orch. Schmid) & Tchaikovsky: None But the Lonely Heart, Op. 6, No. 6 (Orch. Cailliet). Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. V-4413, price \$1.00.

Here is a potential best-seller, a disc that can hardly fail to achieve a vast popular success. It's sure-fire material: on one side the dapper little Dinicu-Heifetz Roumanian scherzo (already a prime favorite on the radio and in

recorded fiddle versions by Heifetz, V-1864, and Candela, C-4194M, reviewed in the March 1938 *Record Supplement*), and on the other side a luscious orchestral version of Tchaikovsky's best-liked song, one of those nostalgic tunes that can't be driven from one's mind and which (since the film *Little Women*) even newsboys whistle in the street. Fiedler plays both pieces for all they're worth and the recording is excellent.

Dvorak: Negro Spiritual Melody (Arr. Kreisler) & Sarasate: Caprice Basque, Op. 24. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) & Marcel Gazelle (piano). 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-15369, price \$2.00.

The so-called Negro Spiritual Melody is of course none other than the main tune of the Largo from the "New World" Symphony, a perennial encore piece on fiddlers' programs in the suave Kreisler setting. Menuhin plays it neatly enough, but with little conviction, as a "request" number he can't very well deny his audience, but in which he finds little pleasure himself. The Caprice, on the other side, is a characteristic bit of Sarasatian fireworks, done with verve and delicate virtuosity, and welcome enough since there is no existing version except under an obscure British label.

Foster: Oh! Susanna (Arr. Cain); Russian Folk Song: Fireflies; Lassus: Echo Song. Augustana Choir (unacc. chorus, in English) conducted by Henry Veld. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. V-1971, price \$1.50.

The titles here are nearly as long as the performances: all three pieces might have been put on a single side of the ten-inch disc. But they are as bright and sprightly as they are brief, making an attractive if rather unsubstantial choral release. I like best the delicious Russian Folk song setting. Lassus' *Olal o che bon echol*, sung in an English text by Nathan Haskell Dole, is an enchanting little piece, but it's done too vivaciously here, losing something of the haunting echo effects (caught much better in the German version by the Dresdner Kreuzchor on V-4326). Noble Cain's setting of Foster's lusty song is much too polite and glee-clubby in character, denaturing and curbing the glorious abandon of the original. The choir sings well, however, and as with its earlier discs the recording is first-rate.

Franck: Pièce Hérotique. Edouard Commette (St. Jean Cathedral, Lyons, Organ). 2 sides, 12" disc, No. C-69460D, price \$1.50.

Like Commette's Bach Toccata and Fugue above, this is a re-recording, replacing an earlier version (C-DFX95) dating from 1933 or earlier. It is a good performance, far superior of course to the 1926 Marcel Dupré version still available on V-9121 (cut-out in England), but I can commend it only to those who are devotees of the pompous, thickly scored *Heroic Piece*, for to my mind it has little musical interest and the recording—while extremely effective—does not compare with the outstanding modern examples of gramophonic organ works.

Gasparini: Adoremus Te Christe. See reverse-side of Mozart: Ave Verum Corpus.

Gounod: Ou voulez-vous aller? See reverse-side of Bazin: Maître Pathelin—Romance.

Gretchaninoff: Over the Steppe, Op. 5, No. 1 & Moussorgsky: Hopak. Igor Gorin (baritone, in Russian) with orchestral accompaniments conducted by Wilfred Pelletier. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. V-4414, price \$1.00.

This is easily the best disc we have yet had from the big-voiced, young Mr. Gorin; here he is given material with which he is familiar and well-equipped. His aren't the finest versions of these songs, but the somber Gretchaninoff air is done with the proper breadth and dark coloring, and Moussorgsky's *Hopak* is sung with fine dash and gusto. Once Gorin can rid himself of a few annoying and affected interpretative mannerisms, there is no reason why he should not give us some performances—particularly of the Russian repertory—really worthy of his magnificent vocal equipment.

Granados: 12 Danzas Españolas. Guillermo Cazes (piano). 12 sides, 6-10" discs, Nos. D-20653/8, price \$3.00 the set (plain album 50c additional).

I must apologize for an error in listing this set in last month's *Record Supplement*: the record numbers were correct, but not the number of sides and discs and the price, which should have been given as in the heading above. And carrying through the obvious misconception that there were only five, instead of six, records in the set I also failed to list the contents of the last disc, Danzas No. 11 in D minor and No. 12 in A minor.

Grétry: Danses Villageoises (3 sides) & Vieuxtemps: Saltarello (Orch. Godard). Orchestre Symphonique (Paris) conducted by F. Ruhlmann. 2-12" discs, Nos. C-P69482/3D, in Set CM-X126, price complete with album \$3.25.

Richard Coeur-de-Lion (1784)—Danse rustique & Colinette à la Cour (1782)—Gavotte (Side 1)

Colinette à la Cour—Danse en rond & L'Épreuve Villageoise (1783)—Gigue (Side 2)

La Rosière de Salency (1776)—Entr'acte & L'Embaras de Richesses (1782)—Contre-danse (Side 3)

Collectors have known this delightful suite drawn from Grétry's operas since 1933 on the Pathé pressings (PAT-X96133/4), and despite the age of the recording the set is still a pleasure to hear and welcome indeed in a domestic re-edition. No mention of an arranger is made on the labels, but whoever collected these dances and set them for modern orchestra did a neat and unobtrusive job, apparently sticking as closely as possible to the originals. Ruhlmann and a properly reduced orchestra play them with fine Gallic verve and lightness of touch, capturing all their eighteenth-cen-

tury charm. On the odd-side the original 'steenth version of *Le Nozze di Figaro* Overture has wisely been replaced by an infectiously rhythmed Vieuxtemps *Saltarello* cleverly orchestrated by Benjamin Godard.

Grieg: Holberg Suite (Aus Holbergs Zeit), Op. 40 (5 sides); **Cowkeeper's Tune & Country Dance, Op. 63 (Zwei nordische Weisen), No. 2.** The Boyd Neel String Orchestra, 3-12" imported discs, Nos. D-X144/6, price \$6.00 the set (plain 3-pocket album 50c additional).

Grieg's *Holberg Suite* had not been represented on discs since acoustic days (Polydor) until last December when both H.M.V. (London String Orchestra, conductor unnamed, G-C3059/60) and Decca (the present set) suddenly appeared with it. The Boyd Neel version takes five instead of four sides and throws in the second of Two Norwegian Melodies, Op. 63, comprising a *Kuhreigen und Bauerntanz*. The Suite, sub-titled "In the Old Style," takes its name from Ludwig Holberg (1684-1754), described on the title page of Grieg's score as the Molière of the North, and creator of the newer Danish-Norwegian literature. Grieg wrote the work for Holberg's bi-centenary in 1884, first as a piano suite and shortly after for string orchestra. It comprises five movements: *Prelude, Sarabande, Gavotte, Air, and Rigaudon*; pleasant, gracious, but not very distinctive music. The odd-side item (a first recording) is more striking, and the *Cow-Keeper's Tune* in particular is a highly atmospheric folkish piece, obviously one of Grieg's compositions that had a significant influence on Delius. Boyd Neel and his skillful little orchestra play both works with the simplicity and warmth they demand, and the recording is excellent. Not a very exciting set, but one that is sure to give a great deal of quiet satisfaction to many who find their keenest pleasure in expressive, reflective, and rather old-fashioned music.

Hahn: D'une Prison & Sjöberg: Visions (Tonerna) (Arr. Balogh). Lotte Lehmann (soprano, in French & English respectively) with piano accompaniments by Erno Balogh. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. V-1972, price \$1.50.

Neither of these songs seems an effective choice for Mme. Lehmann. The Gallic delicacy of Hahn's Verlaine setting demands a singer like Ninon Vallin (who indeed does it beautifully on D-20505), while the dramatic climatic sweep of Sjöberg's celebrated air calls for a man's voice—I much prefer the recent Melchior version (V-1882, reviewed in the June 1938 *Record Supplement*).

HANDEL

Handel: Cantata con Stromenti—Arioso, Dank sei dir, Herr & Schubert: Litanei (Arr. Pasternack). Hulda Lashanska (soprano, in German) with Mischa Elman (violin), Emanuel Feuermann ('cello), & Rudolf Serkin (piano). 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-15365, price \$2.00.

The familiar Arioso, labelled "from *Israel in Egypt*," is more properly identified in the heading above. The oratorio

ascription stems from the fact that the air was interpolated by Ochs (whose arrangement is probably used here) in a German production of *Israel in Egypt*.

The curious miscellany of all-star artists enlisted for these two songs is perhaps explained by the fact that the disc was made for the special purpose of helping to raise funds for refugees' relief, an aim that can be commended much more sincerely than the artistic worth of the performances themselves.

Handel: Concerti Grossi, Op. 6, Vol. 4. Boyd Neel String Orchestra & Arnold Goldsbrough (harpsichord). 12 sides, 6-12" imported discs, Nos. D-X138/43, price \$12.00 the set (plain 6-pocket album 50c additional).
No. 10 in D minor **No. 11 in A major**
No. 12 in B minor (4 sides each)

This set brings to triumphant achievement Decca's and Boyd Neel's ambitious project of a complete recording of Handel's twelve Grand Concertos, Op. 6, based on the Peters Edition edited by Wilhelm Weismann after Fr. Chrysander's two editions, one, in parts, published in 1880, and the other, in score, contained in Vol. XXX of the Handel Gesellschaft.

The earlier releases in this series are: No. 1 in G major (D-25655/6); No. 2 in F major (D-25657/8); No. 3 in E minor (D-25659/60, 3 sides; Side 4, mislabelled in some pressings, contains the first movement of Concerto No. 4); No. 4 in A minor (D-25660/2, 4 sides); No. 5 in D major (D-25662/5, 6 sides); No. 6 in G minor (D-25665/7, 5 sides); No. 7 in B flat major, No. 8 in G minor, No. 9 in F major (imported D-X132/7, sold only as a set).

Of the works in the present set the superb Eleventh Concerto is recorded here for the first time; No. 10 has been represented before only in part; No. 12 was included in the old Ansermet series and was recently done in an isolated version by the Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter.

Here, as in the earlier discs, there are occasional grounds for mild criticism: a tempo that will not seem perfectly chosen to some, a momentary lack of elasticity, and the like, but these are minor flaws indeed in a grand work, grandly conceived and executed. Mr. Neel and his youthful orchestra stand up to Handel's mighty, rhapsodic music with courage and skill, and they are given beautifully clean and strong recording. The series as a whole ranks as one of the major monuments of gramophonic achievement.

Handel: The Gods Go A-Begging—Minuet & Hornpipe (Arr. Beecham). See odd-side of Mozart: Symphony No. 31 in D major.

HAYDN

Haydn: Fantasia in C major. See under Collections (Album of Fantasias).

The Haydn String Quartet Society, Vols. III, IV, V, & VI. The Roth String Quartet. Each Vol. contains 14 sides, 7-12" discs, price complete with album \$14.00 per Vol. (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Vol. III (V-15248/54 in Set VM-525); F major, Op. 3, No. 5; E flat major, Op. 33, No. 2; E flat major, Op. 64, No. 6; B flat major, Op. 71, No. 1

Vol. IV (V-15262/8 in Set VM-526); F minor, Op. 20, No. 5; E flat major, Op. 50, No. 3; C major ("Emperor"), Op. 76, No. 3

Vol. V (V-15276/82 in Set VM-527); D major, Op. 20, No. 4; F major, Op. 74, No. 2; F major, Op. 77, No. 2

Vol. VI (V-15290/6 in Set VM-528); C major, Op. 1, No. 6; E major, Op. 54, No. 3; A major, Op. 55, No. 1; G major, Op. 64, No. 4

Here, with a mighty crash, the dam breaks to give us an almost overwhelming flood of Haydn quartets, the bulk of the output of the H.M.V. Society devoted to these works, lacking only the first two volumes (now out-of-print) and the Volume No. 7 that appeared a few months ago in England and is sure to be re-pressed before long with the present four sets in this country. There isn't much to be said at this late date about the impressive scope of the Haydn Quartet Society or the high standard of musicianship and recording maintained invariably throughout the series: hundreds of collectors own the sets in the imported pressings; thousands of others know of them by reputation and have been waiting only for their release under domestic labels (and at a lower cost) to obtain them. I commend them warmly to everyone interested in chamber music as one of the finest disc investments that can be made, certain to pay inexhaustible dividends in richly satisfying musical pleasure.

Haydn: Sonatas (Piano) in C major, E minor, & D major. Jacob Feuerring (piano). 2 sides each, 3-12" discs, Nos. TI-1309/11, in Set TI-6, price complete with album \$5.00 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

The first major gramophonic contribution to Haydn's piano works; to be reviewed next month.

Haydn: Symphony No. 80 in D minor (Edited by Alfred Einstein) (4 sides) & Symphony No. 67 in F major (5 sides). Orchestra of the New Friends of Music conducted by Fritz Stiedry. 5-12" discs, Nos. V-15336/-40, in Set VM-536, price complete with album \$9.00 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Although we all know that Haydn wrote some 104 symphonies, most of us were not aware that many in the list were not merely neglected in concert, but actually unpublished or published only in grossly inaccurate editions, until The New Friends of Music in New York City announced the presentation of a Haydn series (now in progress) that

included five of these "lost" works, restored to life by the efforts of Dr. Alfred Einstein. Two of these five are recorded here by The New Friends' own orchestra under Dr. Fritz Stiedry: they are not only new to records but to the concert repertory as well.

The New Friends of Music perform a signal service in reviving these splendid works, not Haydn's greatest to be sure, but bearing the unmistakable hall-marks of his prodigious invention and vitality. And in putting them so promptly on discs, the Victor Company enables the gramophone to share honors with the concert organization and give these restored symphonies a vastly expanded audience. Dr. Stiedry's orchestra does not rank with the best of those recording today, but it is a capable, well-drilled ensemble made up almost entirely of young players whose verve and enthusiasm are unmistakable despite the somewhat unelastic—and at times even pedantic—interpretative treatment of the conductor. The recording here is excellent and while I should prefer more supple and expansive readings, it is a pleasure to greet this set as an outstanding contribution to the Haydn discography and call it to the lively attention of every symphonic record collector.

A Collection of Victor Herbert Melodies. Bing Crosby, Frances Langford, Florence George, Rudy Vallée (vocalists) with Max Terr's Choristers and Concert Orchestra conducted by Victor Young. 10 sides, 5-10" discs, Nos. D-2315/9, in Set D-38, price complete with album \$2.25

Naughty Marietta—Ahl Sweet Mystery of Life & Sweethearts—Sweethearts (D-2315)

Naughty Marietta—I'm Falling in Love with Someone & The Fortune Teller—Gypsy Love Song (D-2316)

Naughty Marietta—Italian Street Song & The Fortune Teller—Selections (D-2317)

Babes in Toyland—Toyland & March of the Toys (D-2318)

Indian Summer (An America Idyll) & Yesterthoughts (D-2319)

Another album in Decca's series of light classics, done in popular, i.e. broadcast, style with a group of radio stars, notably Bing Crosby in his blandest and most suave style. By current broadcast standards—and it would be unfair and pointless to consider it by any others—the set is well enough done and the myriads who like this sort of thing will like this very much indeed. I don't, but fifty million radio and Herbert addicts can't be wrong. Or can they?

Hindemith: Sonata (Viola and Piano) in F major, Op. 11, No. 4. William Primrose & Jesus Maria Sanromá. 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. V-15367/8, in Set VM-547, price complete with album \$4.50.

A first recording. The Sonata, Op. 25, No. 1, incorrectly given in the Encyclopedia as for viola and piano, is really

for unaccompanied viola (played by the composer on C-17083/5). The present work dates from 1922 and is No. 4 of a set of six sonatas comprising Op. 11 (Nos. 1 and 2 are for violin and piano, No. 3 for 'cello and piano, No. 5 for unaccompanied viola, No. 6 for unaccompanied violin). Although divided into three movements, the three are more closely linked than in orthodox form and the composer has requested that they be played without pause. A quietly flowing fantasia is followed by a folkish theme and variations, the first four of which—together with the theme—form the second movement, while the more elaborate fifth, sixth, and seventh variations—prefaced by an introduction or interlude—form the finale. Except for the nervous, breathless conclusion, this is far more restrained, expressive, and ingratiating music than the Sonata, Op. 25, No. 1; indeed it is nearly as interesting as the Op. 22 String Quartet (reviewed, in the Coolidge Quartet's performance in VM-524, in the January 1939 *Record Supplement*), and if less high-spirited boasts perhaps even more marked lyric charm. Hindemith here is a far cry from the dry, pedantic, harshly contrapuntal composer of popular conception and in this superb recorded performance by Primrose and Sanromá he gives us an uncommonly attractive and skillful addition to the gramophonic repertory of contemporary chamber music.

Holst: The Planets (Suite of Seven Tone-Poems), Op. 32. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gustav Holst. 14 sides, 7-12" discs, Nos. C-69524/30D, in Set CM-359, price complete with album \$10.50 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Not a new recording but a re-listing of the old set CM-83, reissued now with eccentric run-off grooves at the end of each side and in a silver-imprinted album. The set shows its recording age, but it is still the only complete version and a valuable commemoration of the late Gustav Holst's talents both as composer and conductor.

Järnefelt: Praeludium. See odd-side of Wagner: *Götterdämmerung*—Prelude Act III.

Lassus: Echo Song. See reserve-side of Foster: *Oh! Susanna*.

Liszt: Hungarian Fantasia. Edward Kilenyi (piano) & Grand Orchestre (Paris) conducted by Selmar Meyrowitz. 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. C-P69458/9D, in Set CM-X120, price complete with album \$3.25.

The only domestic version of the *Hungarian Fantasia* has long been that by De Greef (V-9110/1) dating back to 1928; a more recent set by Dupont (PAT-PGT3/4) has never been imported to any great extent, so the present album has a definite place for itself. I can hardly say it fills a great need, for I don't think the blustering war-horse is so popular as all that, but the work is an undeniable concert favorite and it is certainly played and recorded here with bold vigor and bravura. The musical material is

familiar in another form as the *Hungarian Rhapsody* No. 1 (for orchestra, No. 14 in the original piano series).

Loeffler: Music for Four Stringed Instruments. The Coolidge Quartet. 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. V-15349/-51, in Set VM-543, price complete with album \$6.50 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

It is to the gramophone's shame that this is only the second sizeable work by Charles Martin Loeffler (1861-1935) to be recorded. The other was a violin Partita (plus a miniature, *Peacocks*) played by Jacques Gordon and Lee Pattison in CM-275. Victor and the Coolidge Quartet (that in January gave us the first electrical recording of Hindemith's Op. 22 String Quartet) perform a signal service in making the serene beauty and fastidious craftsmanship of the *Music for Four Stringed Instruments* available on discs. The work was written in 1923, in memory of an American Aviator who fell in the war, and bears as motto a citation of the Gregorian intoning of the *Resurrexi* which serves also as the main musical motive of the quartet. And the moving slow movement, outstanding among all Loeffler's work, bears a sub-title: *Le Saint-Jour de Paques* (Easter Sunday).

To those who know Loeffler I can recommend this set as an exquisite example of his polished and yet passionate writing, played and recorded to near-perfection; those unfamiliar with him should read Carl Engel's remarkable tribute to and analysis of the man and composer in *The International Cyclopaedia of Music and Musicians*, after which they should need no prompting to seek him out on these records.

Moussorgsky: Hopak. See reverse-side of Gretchaninoff: *Over the Steppe*.

MOZART

Mozart: Motet—Ave Verum Corpus, K. 618 & Gasparini: Motet—Adoramus Te Christe (sometimes attributed to Mozart, K. 327). Strasbourg Cathedral Choir (in Latin) conducted by Alphonse Hoch, with orchestral and organ (F. Rich) accompaniments respectively. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. C-69488D, price \$1.50.

The Strasbourg Cathedral Choir, one hundred and fifty strong, recently began a recording series under Abbé Alphonse Hoch for Columbia in France and this is the first of the new discs to reach the United States, revealing a warmly sonorous chorus, richly recorded, making an attractive general effect, but hardly notable for its rhythmic precision or clarity of its melodic lines. This is the only up-to-date version of the popular and often recorded Mozart motet and the first gramophonic edition of a motet often credited to Mozart, but now established as the work of Quirino Gasparini, an Italian composer who died in 1778. Neither piece is of major stature, but both are workman-like, pleasing examples of eighteenth century church music and the disc should be well liked.

Mozart: Symphony No. 31 in D major ("Paris"), K. 297 (5 sides) & Handel: The Gods Go A-Begging — Minuet & Hornpipe (arr. Beecham). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs, Nos. C-69470/2D, in Set CM-360, price complete with album \$5.00 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U.S.A.).

Gradually the gaps in the recorded repertory of Mozart symphonies are being filled in. With the release of this first recording only two of the last fourteen symphonies, Nos. 28 to 41 inclusive, remain to be done: No. 30 in D major, K. 202, and No. 37 in G major, K. 444. With the early symphonies of course the picture is less bright: only one, No. 25 in G minor, has been recorded in its entirety.

Le Gros, director of the *Concerts spirituels*, invited Mozart to write the present symphony — among other works — when he visited Paris in 1778. It is well-named the "Paris" Symphony, for Mozart definitely wrote it with Parisian tastes in mind, and it is obviously brilliant, dapper, and decorative rather than introspective and profound. Even so, however, the slow movement was thought too long at the first performance and Mozart rewrote it twice before the symphony reached its present form. It is characteristic of the bright and facile genius of the young Mozart, exulting in his sense of mastery over an orchestra of considerable dimensions, but there are moments here, particularly in the gloriously vivacious but always delicately turned Finale, when we have a prophetic glimpse of the greater Mozart. It goes without saying that Sir Thomas Beecham plays it to perfection, and that the clean sparkle of the London Philharmonic's performance is captured intact in the transparent recording.

A delightful set, and not the least of its attractions are contained in the fill-up, two hitherto unrecorded numbers from Beecham's Ballet Suite arranged from works by Handel. The Minuet is from *Alcina* (the second minuet in the suite recorded by Mengelberg on V-1435/6) and the Hornpipe is the last movement of the Concerto Grosso in B flat major, Op. 6, No. 7.

Pergolesi: Stabat Mater (Edited by Gustav Schreck). Vienna Choir Boys (in Latin) with String Orchestra and Harpsichord conducted by Viktor Gomboz. Soloists: Hans Schneider (soprano), Hans Frank & Erich Kuchar (altos). 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. V-15357/9, in Set VM-545, price complete with album \$6.50 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

1. Stabat Mater (Chorus) Side 1
2. Cujus animam (soprano) & 3. O quam tristis (Chorus) Side 2
- (4. Quae morebat Omitted)
5. Quis est homo (soprano & alto); (6. Vidit suum Omitted); 7. Eia mater (alto) Side 3

11. Inflammatus (soprano & alto) & 8. Fac ut ardeat (chorus) Side 4

9. Sancta Mater (soprano & alto) Side 5
(10. Fac ut portem Omitted)

12. Quando corpus (soprano & alto) & Amen (chorus) side 6.

As can be seen from the outline above, the present performance gives the *Inflammatus* out of its proper order, and three numbers are omitted entirely (there are also cuts in the *Cujus animam*, *Eia mater*, and *Sancta Mater*). There is however an isolated recording of the *Vidit suum* (Hélène Gals on D-25359), and there once was a version of *Quae morebat* (Danise on B-15139, long out-of-print).

It is rather unfortunate that this first major recording of perhaps the best-known setting of the *Stabat Mater* could not have been done without excisions, and for that matter done by a better equipped ensemble. The solo passages here are extremely tremulous, and even the choral sections are sung with little assurance or control. Nevertheless, there is a certain charm to these childish voices; they are accompanied and recorded neatly enough and undoubtedly many will find much to enjoy in the set.

Poulenc: Mass in G major. Les Chanteurs de Lyon (unacc. chorus, in Latin) conducted by E. Bourmauck. 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. C-69486/7D, in Set CM-X127, price complete with album \$3.25.

Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei.

A curious work indeed: a modern setting of the Mass — the first to be recorded — written by, of all contemporary composers, that musical *gamin* Francis Poulenc, formerly of the famous Six. Apparently it is of very recent origin, for no mention of a Mass is given in even the latest reference books, and as the present recording appears here simultaneously with its French release, I have been unable to obtain any information at all on the music. Nor is a preliminary acquaintance with the music itself very enlightening. From my first hearings I must confess to considerable bafflement. Apparently Poulenc is writing with complete sincerity, in a neo-modal, economical and rather remote style, but there are touches of impatient vehemence and interrogatory inflections to many phrases that are neither good modernisms nor suitable to the text. And yet there are passages — particularly in the *Benedictus* and the singular *Agnus Dei* — marked by genuine if strange beauty and poignance. This is a unique set at least and one that may grow in importance with familiarity. The Lyons Singers (who gave us the *Fauré Requiem* — CM-354 — two months ago) cope bravely with the difficulties of its idiom and seem to be well recorded.

Puccini: Turandot (Opera in Three Acts). Sung in the original Italian. 32 sides, 16-12" imported discs, Nos. P-R20410/25, price complete with two albums and libretti in Italian and English \$34.00.

The Cast

Turandot.....	Gina Cigna (S)
Il Principe Ignoto.....	Francesco Merli (T)
Liu.....	Magda Olivero (S)
Timur.....	Luciano Neroni (Bs)
Altoun.....	Armando Giannotti (T)
Un Mandarin.....	Giuseppe Bravura (B)
Ping.....	Afro Poli (B)
Pang.....	Adelio Zangonara (T)
Pong.....	Gino del Signore (T)

E. I. A. R. Chorus & Symphony Orchestra
 Conductor Franco Ghione
 Chorus Master..... Achille Consoli

A momentous release for Puccinians: the first "complete" recording of his last — and for many his finest — opera, *Turandot*. "Complete" is given as usual in quotes, for there are two excisions: one, a couple of pages from the *Terzetto delle maschere* in Act II, Scene 1, is unimportant and only a small section of a cut some fourteen or fifteen pages long sanctioned by the composer, but the other is more serious — some six pages near the end of Act III, Scene 1, (Side 30), including Turandot's aria, *Del primo pianto*. This cut is particularly inexplicable, for the opera is completed on Side 31 and the odd-side given over to the bombastic *Inno a Roma*.

The feature of the work is Puccini's use of the chorus, more extensively and more effectively handled than in any of his earlier operas, and it is the fine E. I. A. R. Chorus, together with the orchestra, that steals top honors here. Ghione gives a magnificent reading and the recording throughout is highly impressive. The soloists, however, are disappointing, particularly in the starring rôles. Merli as the Unknown Prince and Olivero as Liu are fair, but the former reveals considerable vocal coarseness in his more dramatic passages and the latter gets pretty shrill in her upper register. Nevertheless, Olivero and the three masks, Ping, Pang, and Pong, are the best of the singers. Gina Cigna in the title rôle is definitely miscast and her big solos never come off with the brilliance Eva Turner, Maria Nemeth, or some other notable dramatic sopranos have brought to the part.

Saint-Saens: Caprice Arabe, Op. 96. José & Amparo Iturbi (2 pianos). 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-15366, price \$2.00.

Saint-Saens wrote several works for two pianos or piano four-hands of which the best-known is the set of Variations on a Theme of Beethoven, Op. 35, recorded by Bartlett & Robertson, (G-C2483/4) and Bertram & Szreter (D-25373/4), and he was also fond of quasi-oriental musical subjects, exemplified by the *Suite Algérienne* and of course *Samson et Dalila*. The *Caprice Arabe*, however (recorded here for the first time), is a very routine specimen of both his two piano writing and exotic coloring. The Iturbis run through it very neatly indeed, but even they cannot infuse it with much real life or vitality.

Sarasate: Caprice Basque, Op. 24. See reverse-side of Dvorak: *Negro Spiritual Melody*.

Schubert: Litany. See reverse-side of Handel: *Cantata con Stromenti — Arioso*.

SCHUMANN

Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9. Myra Hess (piano). 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. V-12294/6, in Set VM-476, price complete with album \$5.00 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Valse noble, Eusebius, Florestan (Side 2)

Préambule, Pierrot, Arlequin (Side 1)

Coquette, Répétition, Papillons, Lettres dansantes, Chiarina (Side 3)

Chopin, Estrella, Reconnaissance, Pantalon et Colombine (Side 4)

Valse allemande, Paganini, Aven, Promenade (Side 5)

Pause, Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins (Side 6)

The Russian Ballet orchestral version of the *Carnaval Suite* was re-recorded recently (conducted by Goossens in VM-513, December 1938 *Record Supplement*), but an up-to-date gramophonic edition of the original piano version has long been in demand. (The existing sets, by Godowsky, Rachmaninoff, Szreter, and Cortot, all date from 1929 or 1930.) And who could do it better than Miss Hess? Like her performance of the Schumann Concerto (VM-473, reviewed in the January 1939 *Record Supplement*), the *Carnaval* is a characteristic example of her talents, straightforward, unaffected, yet never lacking in romantic feeling. I should prefer a little more sonorous warmth to the recording itself, but — again like the Concerto — it captures the authentic piano tone clearly and without distortion.

Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9 (Ballet Version) — Excerpts (Arr. Douglas). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. C-69461D, price \$1.50.

A typical "Nights at the Ballet" potted version of the orchestral *Carnaval* score, arranged by Roy Douglas presumably after the familiar Russian Ballet version, Goehr brings a brisk and sure touch to these excerpts, but the playing and recording are on the heavy side and hardly comparable with the fine Goossens performance in VM-513.

Schumann: Die Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6. Kurt Appelbaum (piano). 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. MC-1107/9, in set MC-30, price complete with album \$5.00 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

The *Davidsbund* was an imaginary society created by Schumann to combat the "Philistines" of his time and which played an important part in both his critical writings and compositions. It figures prominently in his *Carnaval Suite* and gives its name to the present set of dances, each of which is initialed "E" or "F" (or "E & F") after Eusebius and Florestan, the pseudonyms Schumann adopted to represent the poetic and fiery sides of his nature. *Die Davidsbündlertänze*, despite its early opus number, was actually written after the *Carnaval*, First Sonata, *Etudes Symphoniques*, and C major Fantasia, and ranks as one of his major piano works, in many passages approaching even the high flights of imagination of the great *Kreisleriana*.

It has been recorded twice before: some years ago in a cut version by Fanny Davies (CM-142), again in 1938 by Alfred Cortot (Imported G-DB3263/5). The new set by Kurt Applebaum who made in gramophonic debut in Schubert's G major Sonata, Op. 78 (reviewed in the December 1938 *Record Supplement*) again reveals this gifted young pianist's technical craftsmanship and interpretative sensibility. He is excellently recorded, more cleanly if not as richly as Cortot, and his performance is markedly contrasted in style and feeling with the Frenchman's. Cortot is the more brilliant and florid virtuoso of the two and the more warmly romantic in his reading, while Applebaum is far more subtly poetic and strikes deeper to the heart of Schumann's tender fantasy. This is a set of pure Schumannesque lyricism and while it may not be as popular with the general public as Cortot's it will appeal far more strongly to true devotees of the Great Romanticist. (There is one excision, Dance No. 7, omitted because it was felt to be of less musical interest than the rest, rather than by reasons of space exigencies.)

Schumann: *Fantasiestück in A flat major*, Op. 111, No. 2. See under Collections (*Album of Fantasias*).

Scriabin: *Fantasia in B minor*, Op. 28.

Shostakovich: *Three Fantastic Dances*, Op. 1.

See under Collections (*Album of Fantasias*).

Sjöberg: *Tonerna*. See reverse-side of Hahn: *D'une Prison*.

Spohr: *Concerto (Violin and Orchestra) No. 8 in A minor ("In Form einer Gesangs-Szene")*, Op. 47. Albert Spalding & The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs, Nos. V-15355/6, in Set VM-544, price complete with album \$4.50.

I believe this is Mr. Spalding's first appearance on discs in a major work with orchestra; indeed it is one of his few gramophonic essays in the larger forms. The Spohr Concerto is a curious choice: it is seldom heard in concert today and this set does not even have the merit of uniqueness, for the work has already been recorded—

and excellently—by Georg Kulenkampff and the Berlin Philharmonic under Schmidt-Isserstedt (T-E1847/9). Spohr was a great man in his own day, highly esteemed by both his contemporaries and himself: the eighth concerto is characteristic of his fluent, songful style and thorough understanding of fiddle technique. It was written in 1816 for the specific purpose of presentation by the composer in Italy, hence the sub-title and quasi-operatic flavor of the music. Spalding plays it with the lush suavity Spohr undoubtedly gave it himself, and he is smoothly accompanied and recorded, but there is little here beyond surface sparkle and facile melodiousness, and even for those who find pleasure in the music itself I cannot recommend this performance as highly as the more assured, purer toned reading by Kulenkampff.

Stravinsky (Arr.): *Song of the Volga Boatmen*. See odd-side of Copland: *El Salón México*.

Tchaikovsky: *None but the Lonely heart*, Op. 6, No. 6. See reverse-side of Dinicu: *Hora Staccato*.

Vieuxtemps: *Saltarello (Orch. Godard)*, See odd-side of Grétry: *Dances Villageoises*.

Wagner: *Die Götterdämmerung*—Act III Prelude & Scene 1 (*Song of the Rhinedaughters*, Orch. Wood) (3 sides): Järnefelt: *Praeludium*. Queen's Hall Orchestra conducted by Sir Henry J. Wood. 2-12" imported discs, Nos. D-K765/6, price \$1.50 the pair.

Re-listing one of the most interesting items in the Decca "50c & 75c" Catalogue of which we happen to have a limited stock in the original imported British pressings. Sold at the low domestic price, the set is obviously a good bargain for the British Decca surfaces are thoroughly satisfactory. Sir Henry Wood has made an effective transcription of the Rhinedaughters' Scene, and it is admirably played and recorded. The odd-side coupling is incongruous, but very pleasant light entertainment, Järnefelt's buoyant *Praeludium* in probably its best all round gramophonic version.

Walthew: *Sonata (Viola and Piano) in D* (3 sides) & *A Mosaic in Four Pieces for Viola*. Watson Forbes (viola) & Myers Fogg (piano). 2-12" imported discs, Nos. D-K897/8, price \$3.00 the pair.

British Decca continues its fine work of recording less well known English composers with these two discs devoted to the work of Richard Henry Walthew (b. 1872), a pupil of Stanford and Parry, and a composer in many forms, but particularly chamber music. The Sonata is apparently a fairly recent work for I have not seen it listed in any reference book, but it is aptly described in T. F. Dunhill's general remarks on Walthew in Cobbett's *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music* (Oxford University Press): "Walthew's music is for the chosen few rather than the multitude... the somewhat intimate

and reticent manner in which his ideas are set forth does not exactly command attention. He is a composer who must be sought rather than one who compels the hearer to listen to a forcible message. He adheres in the main to classic forms, his melodic outlines are almost fastidiously shapely, and his workmanship is of the most cultured description. His chamber music, therefore, is what he himself has declared chamber music should be — 'the music of friends.' Both the Sonata and the four little Schumannesque pieces on the odd-side are played and recorded with obvious sympathy and skill. Not an exciting or outstanding set, but a pair of discs in which some listeners are sure to find rich if quiet pleasure.

COLLECTIONS

Album of Fantasias. Grace Castagnetta (piano). 8 sides, 4-12" discs, Nos. TI-1305/8, in Set TI-5, price complete with album \$6.50 (Parcel Post prepaid to any part of the U. S. A.).

Haydn: Fantasia in C major & Shostakovich: 3 Fantastic Dances, Op. 1 (TI-1305)

Beethoven: Fantasia in G minor, Op. 77 (TI-1306)

Schumann: Fantasiestück in A flat major, Op. 111, No. 2 & Brahms: Intermezzo in E major, Op. 116, No. 4 (TI-1307)

Scriabin: Fantasie in B minor, Op. 28 (TI-1308)

The enterprising and imaginative Timely Company again, this time with one of the most ingenious and attractive of its unique contributions to the recorded repertory: a sheaf of Fantasias ranging from Haydn and Beethoven to Scriabin and Shostakovich, housed in one of the handsomest albums I have ever seen. The album itself is illustrated with a characteristic drawing by Hendrik Van Loon and accompanied by no less than two sets of notes, one a booklet in Mr. Van Loon's most engaging style and the other technical annotations by Leo Liberthson.

But it is not merely the admirable format of this work that calls for praise. Timely has shown before what it can do with piano recording (the Mozart two-piano Sonata in D, K. 448, TI-1302/3, reviewed in the May and June 1938 *Record Supplements*); here its skill is even more brilliantly revealed in the clean, solid capture of authentic piano tone and sonority. Miss Castagnetta, who played with Milton Kaye in the Mozart Sonata, again impresses one by her straightforward approach to the music and the craftsmanly way in which she gives it clear and vital exposition. A notable set and one which is a pleasure to welcome and unreservedly recommend.

FOLK MUSIC

Thirteen French Folk Songs. Martial Singer (baritone) & Renée Mahé (soprano, in French). 12 sides, 6-10" imported discs, Nos. FL-101/6, price complete with album & leaflets \$10.00.

CONTENTS: *Le Pauvre Etameur* (vielle accompaniment), *Le Chevrier dans la Montagne* (piccolo acc.), *Chanson de Labour — Nivernais* (unacc.), *Chanson de la Laine* (Mlle. Mahé, vielle acc.), *Lou Bouié* (flute acc.), *Chanson de L'Aveine* (viol acc.) & *Le Rémoqueur* (vielle acc.), *Les Tilloliers* (piccolo acc.), *Les Marins de Groix* (vielle acc.), *Margaridette se regard* (Mlle. Mahé, flute acc.), *Plantons la Vigne* (vielle acc.), *Les Tisserands* (cornemuse acc.), *Scions de la Plancha* (vielle acc.). M. Singher sings all the airs except the two credited to Mlle. Mahé above.

Last January, reviewing the first *Chant du Monde* set of "French Provincial Folk Songs in Modern Arrangements" I referred to the present *Florilège* discs as the finest available examples of genuine French folk songs done in authentic versions, and for the benefit of those who are unfamiliar with this remarkable set it is re-listed herewith. Made by the makers of the incomparable *Anthologie Sonore* recordings under the pedagogic direction of Paul Philippon, superbly sung by M. Singher to the accompaniment of authentic old instruments, and accompanied by excellent descriptive and text leaflets, this is one of the most significant gramophonic contributions to the folk lore repertory of any nation.

Russian Folk Song: Fireflies. See odd-side of Foster: *Oh! Susanna*.

Russian Folk Song: Song of the Volga Boatmen (Arr. Stravinsky). See odd-side of Copland: *El Salón México*.

DICTION

On Reading Chaucer and Chaucer: Prologue to the Canterbury Tales & The Nun's Priest's Tale. Dr. Harry Morgan Ayres. 2 sides, 10" disc, No. HPS-1, price \$1.50.

Mr. Walter C. Garwick, who gave us the remarkable disc of Charleston, South Carolina, Street Cries (SPS-1, May 1938 *Record Supplement*) and records by Robert P. Tristram Coffin and Vachel Lindsay (*Record Supplements* for June and April 1938) in the Contemporary Poets Series, now inaugurates a Historical Poets Series, under the auspices of The National Council of Teachers of English, George Hibbitt and W. Cabell Greet, Editors. Here Dr. Ayres, Professor of English at Columbia University, devotes one side of his record to a brief but extremely helpful explanation of the proper pronunciation of Chaucer's language, and the other to the opening sections of two of the best-known excerpts from *The Canterbury Tales*, read with admirable clarity and simplicity. Excellently recorded, this is a distinguished and valuable addition to the neglected gramophonic repertory of early English poetry. Indeed there is only one other notable disc in this field: passages from Chaucer's *The Pardoner's Tale* and the Middle English *Debate of the Body and the Soul* read by Professor Fred Norris Robinson of Harvard (HU-2, \$2.00).

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